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Social development: social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Promotion and protection of human rights: implementation of human rights instruments

Letter dated 10 July 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement made by the representative of the Russian Federation in connection with item 6 on the agenda of the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 26 (a) and 68 (a).

(*Signed*) P. **Ilichev**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 10 July 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the representative of the Russian Federation at the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in connection with agenda item 6, "Interactive dialogue between States parties and the United Nations system on the implementation of the Convention".

Mr. President,

Allow me, as part of the consideration of this agenda item, to comment on some aspects of the activity of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We believe that the foundation for effective operation of the human rights treaty body system is close adherence, by the committees associated with the Conventions, to the mandates conferred on them, along with an ability to build an equal and mutually respectful dialogue with the States parties.

In our view, multilingualism has recently become one of the most pressing issues. I wish to point out that General Assembly resolution 68/268 on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system provides that the treaty bodies may decide, on an exceptional basis, to use a fourth official language in addition to the three official working languages. That practice must operate without prejudice to the right of each State party to interact with the treaty bodies in any of the six official languages of the United Nations.

However, our information indicates that this does not always happen in practice. We are particularly concerned that, while this rule is applied for communication with a national Government delegation (and even then not automatically, but at the insistence of the State in question), meetings with civil-society institutions are conducted only in the three United Nations working languages. Unfortunately, this happens even when the State reporting to a Committee uses another official language. As a result, members of a treaty body must rely on information from major international-network-type non-governmental organizations rather than from representatives of civil society working directly on the ground.

Mr. President,

Examination of the Russian Federation's initial report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is scheduled for spring 2018. We hope that when the report is "defended" in the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, interpretation into Russian will be provided, without any need for additional reminders, and that it will also be provided during the traditional meeting between the Committee experts and civil-society institutions, which I wish to emphasize is part of the official session of the Committee.

Mr. President,

We would like to raise separately the issue of general comments made by the Committee during its dialogue regarding periodic reports with national delegations.

In our view, these comments are solely the opinion of the treaty body experts and may not impose on States any obligations additional to those undertaken by them when ratifying or acceding to the Convention, unless otherwise declared by States on a voluntary basis. Such additional contributions from the Committee go beyond the terms of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and accordingly

cannot be taken into account during the examination of a State's periodic report or included in the concluding observations on the outcome of that examination.

Thank you for your attention.